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BYSIEWICZ: PASSAGE OF ETHICS BILL A MAJOR STEP FORWARD FOR CONNECTICUT

ETHICS REFORM A VICTORY FOR TAXPAYERS

HARTFORD: Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz today hailed the Connecticut General Assembly for passing a comprehensive ethics reform package including the revocation of pensions for corrupt officials.

“Connecticut residents can rest assured that crooked and corrupt elected and state officials can no longer commit a crime, betray the public trust, and then pick the pocket of Connecticut taxpayers by receiving a pension,” said Bysiewicz. “These reforms are a major step forward in the quest to end a culture of corruption, cleanup state government, and restore the public's trust in our elected officials and government.”

In December, Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz and Attorney General Richard Blumenthal announced their joint plan to overhaul Connecticut's ethics code for elected and public officials.

Their joint proposal contains five areas of reform:

- **Pension Revocation.** This law would revoke pension benefits of any state elected official or top appointee convicted of a crime related to their employment. This would include embezzlement, bribery, and fraud. Such a penalty would serve as a powerful deterrent to the people in power.

- **Municipal Code of Ethics.** This proposal will require all municipalities to either establish a code of ethics for municipal elected officials or adopt a model code of municipal ethics promulgated by the Office of State Ethics.
- **False Claims Act.** Penalize contractors who defraud the state and municipalities by filing false claims and work orders. Contractors who are found guilty of defrauding the state could be fined and removed from the pool of state contractors.
- **Judicial Reform.** This law would prevent the judicial branch from sealing court cases involving prominent businessmen, politicians, and judges from the public.
- **Permanent Legislative Committee on Ethics.** In addition to the Office of State Ethics, create a permanent bipartisan committee to hold accountable fellow members of the state legislature. The committee would have the power to investigate the conduct of members of the legislature, issue subpoenas, and recommend reprimand, censure or expulsion to the legislature.

“We recognize that we still have work to do, but today marks a giant step forward for Connecticut,” said Bysiewicz. “I look forward to continuing this effort during the next legislative session.”

Secretary Bysiewicz has long advocated for comprehensive ethics reform. This legislative session she testified before the Government Administration and Elections Committee and the Judiciary Committee to register her continued support on these issues.